

Every Student Succeeds Act **in Iowa**

Frequently Asked Questions from Iowa Administrators and Educators

Supplemental Education Services and Choice options for 2016-17

Question: What plans should we proceed with, if any, for Supplemental Education Services (SES) for the 2016-17 school year?

Response: School districts will need to maintain effort, and this is defined in the SES and school choice [transition plan](#) that the Department submitted to the U.S. Department of Education in May.

Question: Does this mean that districts are still required to set aside a percentage of their Title I money for SES?

Response: There is no requirement to set specific money aside, but districts must ensure they maintain efforts made with students who previously accessed either SES or school choice options in buildings designated as “School in Need of Assistance” (SINA). For more information, visit the SES and school choice [transition plan](#).

Question: Since we were on the SINA list last year, we will remain so next year, but do we have to offer school choice or SES again?

Response:

School Choice

There is no requirement for 2016-17 to offer school choice in the event you are still a SINA building. However, ESSA does require that if you have families who took advantage of the school choice option under NCLB, those students must be allowed to continue that option until they exit the building they are currently attending.

SES

There is no requirement for 2016-17 to offer SES as they were defined under NCLB. However, ESSA does require districts to maintain effort with those students identified as qualified for SES supports. See the transition plan referenced above for additional detail.

Question: If a family chooses a tutoring service that is not the service the school provides, does the district have to pay for it? Will the state be sending out a list of tutors? Must districts send out a letter with the names of all vendors?

Response: As previously stated, school districts are not required to provide a list of SES providers, pay for access to private tutors, or provide parent notification in 2016-17. School districts will have to describe how they will “maintain effort” with students identified as previously qualified for SES supports. School districts will include this information in their SINA plans within the Title IA application.



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Question: How should districts use the SES provider list in 2016-17?

Response: Districts must decide how to maintain effort with students who would have qualified for SES in previous years. This does not require districts to provide SES as defined under NCLB. They have to provide supports for those qualified students somehow. There is no list of providers for 2016-17. Districts may continue providing SES services as they did, but it is their option and there is no list of approved providers for 2016-17.

Question: Does our SES plan need to be the same at each eligible school or can we differentiate what happens at each individual school based on needs of students?

Response: Local school districts will develop the plan that works for them. The critical piece in all of this is maintaining effort with the identified students. It seems reasonable to believe that this could look different in different buildings depending on the demographics and the student population served.

Question: Can we have transportation costs covered by SES funding? Is there a certain amount of the Title I allocation that needs to go to SES services?

Response: There is no specific funding for SES in 2016-17. Any supports provided to identified students would be a Title IA expense. Title I money can be used to provide transportation for students participating in SES services. There is no specific requirement on set-aside for SES – again, the district must maintain effort with identified students and will have to describe in the Title IA application for 2016-17 how this will occur.

Question: Can we choose to use an outside provider on a limited basis, stipulating what we want that provider to do?

Response: The district can elect to use an outside provider. That is a decision made by the local district.

Question: For next year, we understand that districts now have the flexibility to deliver SES services themselves without needing to partner with a private provider on the former approved SES provider list. However, if next year a parent requests to the district that their child receive SES services from a private provider, even if the district is providing SES services directly, is the district obligated to honor the parent request? Or, in that scenario, would the district have the flexibility to inform the parent that SES services would be offered exclusively by the district?

Response: Districts are not obligated to honor parent requests to receive SES services from a private provider. Districts are obligated to maintain effort with identified students and to share their plan with the Department and with parents. Districts are under no obligation to inform parents of information related to SES services outside of what they are planning to offer students.

Question: Can SES transition services be provided to students in all of our Title I schools regardless of their SINA designation? Shouldn't all low-income students in Title I schools should be afforded this opportunity?



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Response: Districts are obligated to offer SES transition services to low-income students in SINA 2 and above schools, but districts can offer extended day services in Title I buildings to those students eligible for Title I services using part of their building allocation. Districts cannot offer Title I services to non-qualified students.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Schools/Districts in Need of Assistance

Question: Will schools and districts in years 1-2 of “in need of assistance” be required to set aside and spend 10% on professional development? What can Schools in Need of Assistance (SINA) and Districts in Need of Assistance (DINA) expect during the 2016-17 school year?

Response: SINA 1 & 2 buildings will be required to set aside and spend 10% of their Title I building allocation for professional development. DINA 1 & 2 will be required to set aside and spend 10% of their Title I district allocation for professional development. SINA/DINA guidance was addressed in Director Wise’s [April 4 memo related to AYP and SINA/DINA](#).

Question: Will we be expected to file an Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) report this year?

Response: The Department has chosen to freeze the AYP status of all districts and schools in the state for the 2016-17 school year. There will not be a new calculation for AYP. Every district and school will have the same AYP status for the 2016-17 school year as they had during the 2015-16 school year. This also means that SINA and DINA designations because of AYP status will remain the same as they were in 2015-16. For more information, please reference Director Wise’s [April 4 memo](#).

Question: Do you have a timeline on when decisions will be made on set-aside funds for SINA I and/or DINA I (10% of district allocation for professional development)?

Response: SINA 1 & 2 buildings will be required to set aside and spend 10% of their Title I building allocation for professional development. DINA 1 & 2 will be required to set aside and spend 10% of their Title I district allocation for professional development.

Question: I read the letter about freezing our SINA status. Does this also mean that we will again receive SINA funding?

Response: SINA buildings will receive a SINA allocation for the 2016-17 school year.

Question: Will the SINA money remain the same as this year?

Response: Yes, with minor variations associated with the number of buildings.

Question: Do you would have any guidance on Title I professional development allocations? This year our school was required to spend 10% of our Title I allocations on professional development. Will that be the case next year?

Response: SINA 1 & 2 buildings will be required to set aside and spend 10% of their Title I building allocation for professional development. DINA 1 & 2 will be required



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to set aside and spend 10% of their Title I district allocation for professional development.

Question: Regarding the "freeze" on AYP status for schools: Does this also include schools that were scheduled to be removed from the SINA/DINA list if they had met requirements for 2015-16? Is it possible to not add any schools/districts to the SINA/DINA lists during this year of transition?

Response: Our decision to freeze the SINA/DINA designations was not made lightly. Many districts and schools have worked hard to meet AYP, so it is somewhat difficult to immediately abandon AYP as we transition to a new accountability system.

Unfortunately, we are only permitted to either create new SINA and DINA lists for all districts in the state or freeze the lists for everyone. We are not permitted to allow some districts and schools to fall off of the list by running a partial AYP model. Our choice, and that which we believe benefits most districts and schools, is to freeze the list. This permits districts and schools to continue to implement their current plans for an additional year, revise their plans as necessary, and focus on transitioning to a new accountability system.

We suggest that districts and schools making significant improvement work to communicate with their local communities about their results, and we welcome your feedback on how we can help with that communication. Send feedback via email to ESSA@iowa.gov.

Question: Is it the Department's plan to not look at the 2016 Iowa Assessments spring test results?

Response: We think it is important for all districts to look at their data; however, the state will not be using Iowa Assessments data to make a new AYP determination in the 2016-17 transition year.

Question: Subject: A school that was designated SINA, Year 4, Delay for 2016-17, would have the same status for 2017-18. Is there funding attached?

Response: The 2015-16 status will be frozen for the 2016-17 school year. So, if a building's status was Delay 4 in 2015-16, that building's status will be Delay 4 in 2016-17. SINA schools will receive SINA allocations in 2016-17. There will be a new accountability plan in place for the 2017-18 school year.

Question: Will you consider a way to allow Delay 1 schools that have met AYP this year to be removed from SINA/Delay 1 status? It seems that Delay 1 schools have a more punitive impact with the proposed freeze, while schools that were watch list last year and miss AYP this year have the luxury of not being held accountable for missing AYP.

Response: We applaud your hard work and sincere effort and we are pleased that you've seen the results from that effort. As stated above, states were given the choice of maintaining the existing system of AYP and SINA/DINA or freezing the system for one year and Iowa has elected to freeze the system, which includes



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buildings on Delay status. We encourage you to promote the good results you've seen locally.

Question: Muscatine is officially closing Washington Elementary. WA was a SINA 2 school. The 240 students will go to 3 buildings - all of which are SINA schools. What does the new authorization say about the status of those schools "accepting" kids from a SINA 2 school?

Response: Since the 240 students will be divided among the three buildings that are already on the SINA list, adding a few students to each of the three buildings will not impact the current SINA status. The SINA designation for the three buildings will remain the same as in 2015-16.

Question: Will there be a calculation of AYP for a school that will let us know if we would have gotten off the list? For example, our AYP data is usually different than raw data because of Full Academic Year calculations, etc.

Response: There will not be an AYP calculation for 2016-17. Districts are encouraged to communicate progress as they determine desirable.

Title IA Schoolwide Provisions

Question: We have school buildings currently using the 2015-16 school year as the planning year for a Title I Schoolwide Program to begin in the fall. Will these buildings be allowed to begin their Schoolwide Program in the fall of 2016? May they use the NCLB Schoolwide Program requirements for their first year (beginning fall 2016), or must they begin their first year using the ESSA Schoolwide Program requirements?

Response: Schools planning to become schoolwide in the fall of 2016 will need to follow NCLB requirements during the 2016-17 school year, as recently clarified by the U.S. Department of Education.

Question: Are districts required to notify parents of the "right-to-know notification"?

Response: No. In order to ensure an orderly transition from ESEA requirements under the NCLB to those under the ESSA, the Department has identified the following provisions with which a State or LEA need not comply during the 2016-2017 school year because those provisions are not continued under ESSA:

Section 1111(h)(6)(B)(ii) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, which requires a school to notify parents when their child has been assigned to, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified (see D-3); 3. Section 1117

Title IA Applications and Budgets for 2016-17

Question: With the changes in deadlines, how do districts handle carryover budgets from FY16 to FY17? When will districts see their allocations?



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Response: The application is due in mid-June for the next fiscal year. At that point, districts should know their projected spending of these funds, including accruals, but in the event that they don't, Title IA budgets can be amended. Preliminary allocations for 2016-17 are available now. Carryover budgets will be added to the Title I application after districts have finalized their 2015-16 Title I budgets, which are due July 15, 2016.

Question: Will AEAs be able to get access to the Title I application to view any changes that buildings/districts make to their SINA/DINA plans to allow us to support our buildings/districts? Can you walk through the timing of the Title I application due dates for 2015-16 and 2016-17? Will all SINA budgets and plan changes be due in June also?

Response: AEAs will have access to each building/district plan for 2015-16 in C-Plan. Buildings are uploading only the changes they make to their SINA plans and we would expect the districts to share this data with their AEA. Title IA applications and budgets and SINA plans and budgets will be due on June 15, 2016. The budgets found in the 16-17 Title I application should include expenditures from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

Question: How will ESSA will change or not change the paraeducator requirement below:

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires paraeducators whose work is supported by Title I funds to meet required competencies. This includes those working in Title I programs, or working in a school building that has a school-wide Title I program. In order to meet these competencies, the paraeducator whose duties include instructional support and who were hired after January 8, 2002, must have:

- 1. completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; OR*
- 2. obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; OR*
- 3. met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment, knowledge or and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics (or as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness);*
- 4. OR obtained voluntary certification through the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BoEE).*

Response: NCLB requirements with which a State or LEA need not comply with during the 2016-17 school year have been spelled out by the U.S. Department of Education. Since highly qualified paraprofessional requirements were not on the list, Iowa will require instructional paraprofessionals to be highly qualified during the 2016-17 school year.

Title IIA Applications and Budgets for 2016-17

Question: Will the certification rules for hiring a long-term substitute teacher be the same in Iowa under ESSA as they have been under NCLB?



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Response: We assume you are connecting this question to highly qualified teacher requirements under Title IIA of NCLB. Title IIA was significantly changed by ESSA and at this point, we are working through the details of the new law. Any changes to requirements under Title IIA will be addressed in the updated statewide plan under ESSA, which does not implement until 2017-18. Districts do have to hire appropriately licensed substitute teachers.

Title III Applications and Budgets for 2016-17

Question: How will Lau plans be submitted in 2016-17?

Response: The requirements for reporting in 2016-17 will not change from the requirements under NCLB.

ESSA Statewide Plan

Question: How will ESSA impact bullying prevention and intervention efforts? Has the Department or state decided the areas bulleted below?

“The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. This measure reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and replaces the No Child Left Behind Act. A portion of ESSA requires states to incorporate non-academic factors into their accountability systems and State Educational Agency (SEA) plans must indicate how they will help districts address discipline, bullying and harassment, and improve school climate. State accountability systems must include academic indicators (including student growth if they choose) as well as at least one indicator of school quality to ensure that states report on opportunity gaps and take action to close them. Indicators of school quality may include:

- access to advanced coursework
- school climate and safety
- student and educator engagement
- postsecondary readiness
- any other indicator the State chooses that meets the requirements of this clause”

Response: We have a working group that will be tasked with identifying the accountability indicators including the non-academic indicators that will go into our accountability plan and all required factors will be included in the plan that will be developed in the next school year.

Question: Will the state continue with Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or some other form of a yearly target proficiency rate for English Language Arts (ELA) and math? Under NCLB, the target was the very overambitious 100 percent. Will this change? If so, has it been established what the annual targets will be moving forward? Also, will the state have targets for science?

Response: Iowa will not continue with AMOs in ELA or math for the 2016-17 school year.



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Question: How is the Department addressing the language around Universal Design for Learning in ESSA?

Response: This has not been determined, and it may be spelled out in the process of developing the new state ESSA plan.

Question: Since the passage of ESSA reauthorizes both the ESEA and McKinney-Vento laws, at some point IAC [281] CH 33 will need to be reviewed for any conflicting language with new amendments of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Subtitle VII-B.

Response: We understand that some state administrative rules may need to be revised in the upcoming years once new federal regulations are available and once a new state ESSA Plan is developed.

Question: What is the intersection and funding potential between Ed Tech/Digital Learning and ESSA?

Response: There is no direct funding for technology/digital learning in ESSA. There is a new general block grant included and the uses of those funds will be determined during the process of developing the state ESSA plan.

Question: How is the Department of Education collecting important stakeholder feedback regarding Social Emotional Learning, School Climate, Bullying Prevention and Intervention, and Healthy Learning Environments?

Response: See the related question above. We have a working group that will be tasked with identifying the accountability indicators including the non-academic indicators that will go into our accountability plan and all required factors will be included in the plan that will be developed in the next school year.

Question: I understand under the authorization of ESSA, each state will have a "Statewide Family Engagement Center." Is there a center determined in Iowa? If yes, can you please provide information regarding that center? If not, how and when will that be determined?

Response: There are many details included in ESSA that must be addressed and this is one. This will be addressed in the development of the new state ESSA plan and that plan is scheduled to be completed by spring of 2017.

Question: If it is true that we won't be getting AYP data this year, I have a few questions:

1. Will you be running the calculations for the Iowa School Report Card and will we be able to access and verify that information?
2. It is my understanding that our AYP status has been used with our ESL program and has been the basis for the corrective action plan. How does not having this number impact that program?

Response: Student performance data will continue to be an element included in the Iowa School Report Card. AYP calculations are a very specific requirement of



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NCLB and will not be replicated in August for the 2016-17 school year. Moving forward, ELL accountability has been folded in to the accountability system required under ESSA and work has begun to determine the appropriate path forward on these new requirements. Since AYP and SINA/DINA designations are frozen for 2016-17, we will continue to operate under NCLB requirements until the new plan is in place for 2017-18.

Question: I have heard rumors that under ESSA students will need to be monitored for three years instead of two once they exit ELL. I have tried to search ESSA for any reference but I am not able to find anything. Will students who exit from ELL need to be monitored for three years? If yes, can you give a code reference?

Response: Accountability for ELL programming and student process is now a part of ESSA and Title IA monitoring. Since this is a change from practice under NCLB, the process to develop the new ESSA plan will address this issue moving forward. We would agree that this decision needs to be made early enough that data systems can be adjusted accordingly.

Question: Has the Department made any plans or timetables for implementing the new federal law, such as holding public hearings or meetings, or asking for written comments from parents or teachers? If not, is the Department planning to do that kind of thing or is it waiting for something like regulations from the federal government or action from another branch of state government?

Response: The Department is well under way with plans to develop a new statewide plan under ESSA. The Department's [ESSA web page](#) will be a primary source of information on progress and updates related to the new statewide plan development. The Department will be convening a very inclusive advisory committee to provide reaction and input to the plan development. The first meeting of this advisory committee will be June and the group will meet roughly every other month through February of 2016, when we anticipate the new plan will be submitted. The Department has organized the work into eight discrete functional areas. Those teams, comprised of Department employees with support from experts in the field, will be responsible for a portion of the plan development. The public will have ongoing opportunities to review information and draft plan language on the ESSA web page and can submit comments at any time via email to ESSA@iowa.gov.

Question: I am trying to follow up on some information I received from a coworker regarding the offering of any online instruction dealing with the transition from NCLB to ESSA. Do you know of any opportunities for this?

Response: As appropriate, the Department will offer webinars related to ESSA implementation issues. There is a large and ongoing need for support to the field on a variety of issues related to ESSA and the plan for support will be included in the overall statewide ESSA plan that is developed over the next six to eight months.

Question: Are you working with a group on the 'non-cognitive' (social/emotional) piece of ESSA that districts will be reporting out on?



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Response: This is all part of the conversation about the development of updated accountability systems under ESSA. There will be opportunities for review and input as the process moves to the development of a new ESSA statewide plan, but none of this has been determined today. The accountability system is the topic of one of the ESSA work groups.

Question: How will the Department engage the public? How can parents and teachers participate in the process, and what is your timeline for action of any kind?

Response: The Department will release additional information on stakeholder engagement in August. There will be multiple methods of providing input to the development of the new statewide ESSA Plan. We expect to have a complete draft of the plan ready for public comment in February, but between now and February, there will be multiple opportunities for input on pieces of the plan. More information on this will be available soon.

